

REMARKS

This is a simultaneous amendment of the English translation of the U.S. National Stage of PCT/EP 2004/013305.

Claims 1 to 12 of the English translation of the original PCT application have been canceled and replaced by new claims 13 to 27 above.

New claims 13 to 27 include agent claims 13 to 23 and method-of-dyeing hair claims 24 to 27. The new claims have been drafted in a form that complies with US Patent Office Rules. No “use” claim, such as claim 10 of the English translation, is included in new claims 13 to 27, since that claim form is not permitted in US Patent Practice. The subject matter of the “use” claim is included in new independent method-of-use claim 24. New claims 22 and 27 contain new subject matter based on the applicant's specification.

Multiple claim dependencies have been eliminated to save prosecution costs and to provide a more efficient prosecution.

More specifically, new agent claims 13 to 20 contain the subject matter of canceled agent claims 1 to 8 respectively, but are in a form that complies better with US Patent Office Rules. New agent claims 21 and 23 contain subject matter from canceled agent claim 9. New method claims 24 to 26 contain the subject matter from canceled claims 10 to 12.

New dependent method claim 27 includes additional subject matter regarding protection of the reduced vat dye from atmospheric oxygen as

disclosed in the English translation of applicants' specification at page 11, line 25 and following. New agent claim 22 includes self-coupling compounds in the same manner as the developers and couplers from claim 9 and is based on the disclosures in the specification.

The specification has been amended to provide recommended section headings, to revise the summary of the main agent claim in the specification, and to correct minor typographical errors in the text on pages 4 and 14.

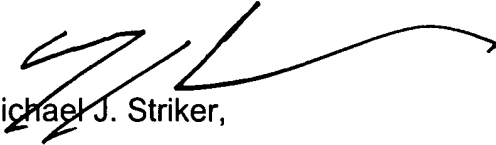
Note that "new matter" issues do not arise from simultaneous amendments, which are effective as of the filing date of the application.

A new abstract has been provided, which is within the 150-word limit for abstracts and does not use legalistic claim words, such as "said", as required by the rules.

Should the Examiner require or consider it advisable that the specification, claims and/or drawing be further amended or corrected in formal respects to put this case in condition for final allowance, then it is requested that such amendments or corrections be carried out by Examiner's Amendment and the case passed to issue. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing the case to allowance, he or she is invited to telephone the undersigned at 1-631-549 4700.

In view of the foregoing, favorable allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Striker', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Michael J. Striker,

Attorney for the Applicants

Reg. No. 27,233